

Enhancing the employability skills of STEM student ambassadors

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Workshop overview

- Why we became involved
- Benefits beyond the initial training
- Initial training contents
- Training the trainers
- Future plans



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Why we became involved

Employability is high on the agenda for all universities

Student Ambassadors are key to our Outreach and Student Recruitment work.

- We were considering ways of supporting Student Ambassadors to recognise the skills acquired through the role
- An opportunity to share good practice
- An opportunity to work with external partners



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Initial workshop contents

What are Employability Skills?

‘A set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess to ensure they have the capability of being effective in the workplace – to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy.’

CBI, 2010



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Benefits beyond the initial training

For students

Supporting project delivery and development to further enhance their skills and experience

Providing role-specific examples of acquiring employability skills through the collation of case studies

For staff

Developing materials and approaches that can be embedded in the normal cycle of recruitment and training

Finding ways for Ambassadors to support project delivery and development to reduce load on staff

Sharing good practice



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Employability Skills are

- Teamwork
- Business and Customer Awareness
- Problem Solving and Creativity
- Communication and Literacy
- Application of Numeracy
- IT Skills
- Positive Attitude
- Entrepreneurship



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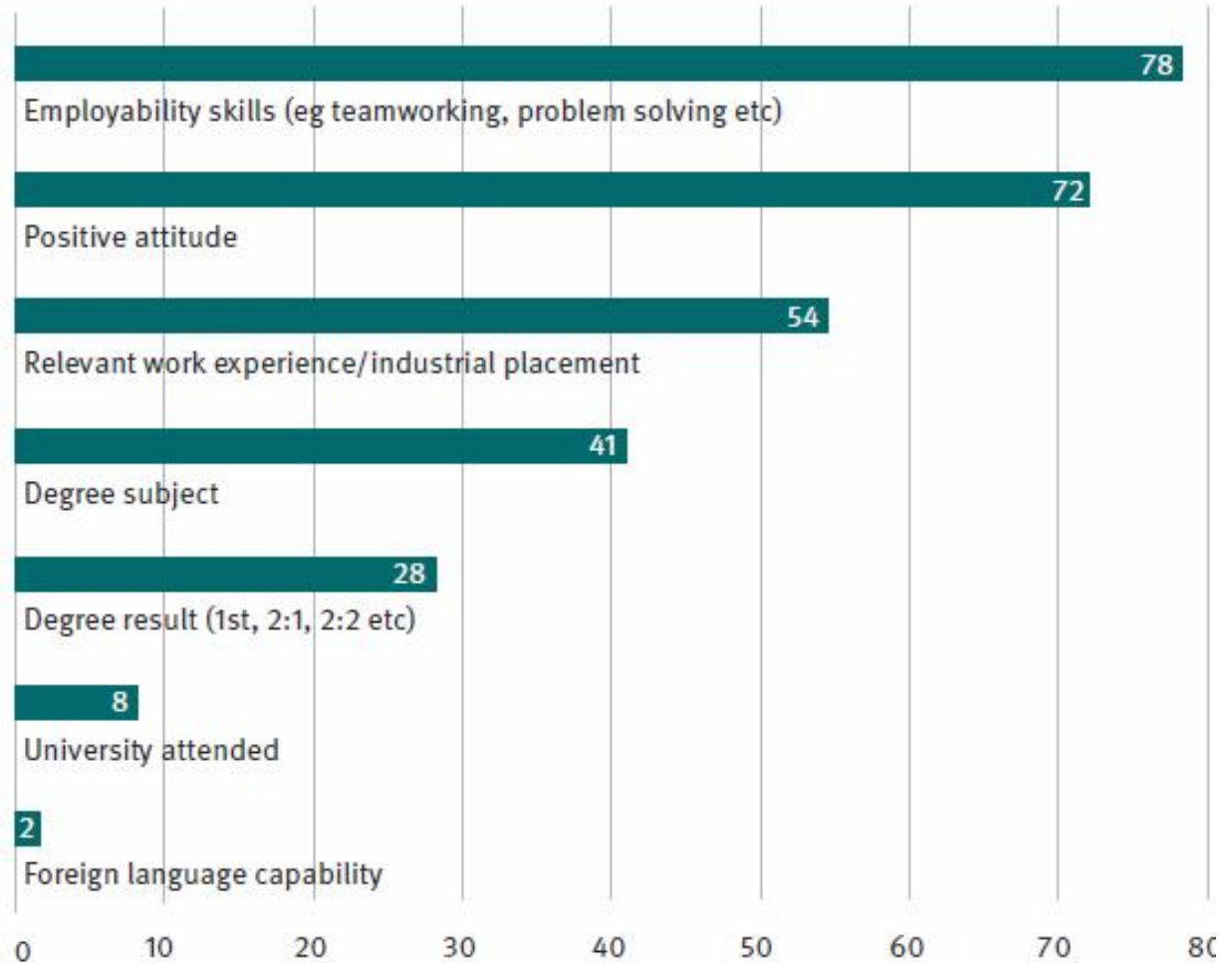
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Exhibit 1: Important factors considered when recruiting graduates (%)

Why do you need them?

Employers look for them



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Exhibit 2: The level to which graduates are equipped with employability skills (%)



But often potential employees don't have them

Or is it that potential employees aren't demonstrating that they have them?



Skills that employers want and how they can be developed

Personal audit of Employability Skills



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Job Applications

- What employers are seeking on job applications
- Creating a CV
- Responding to advertisements
- Covering letter



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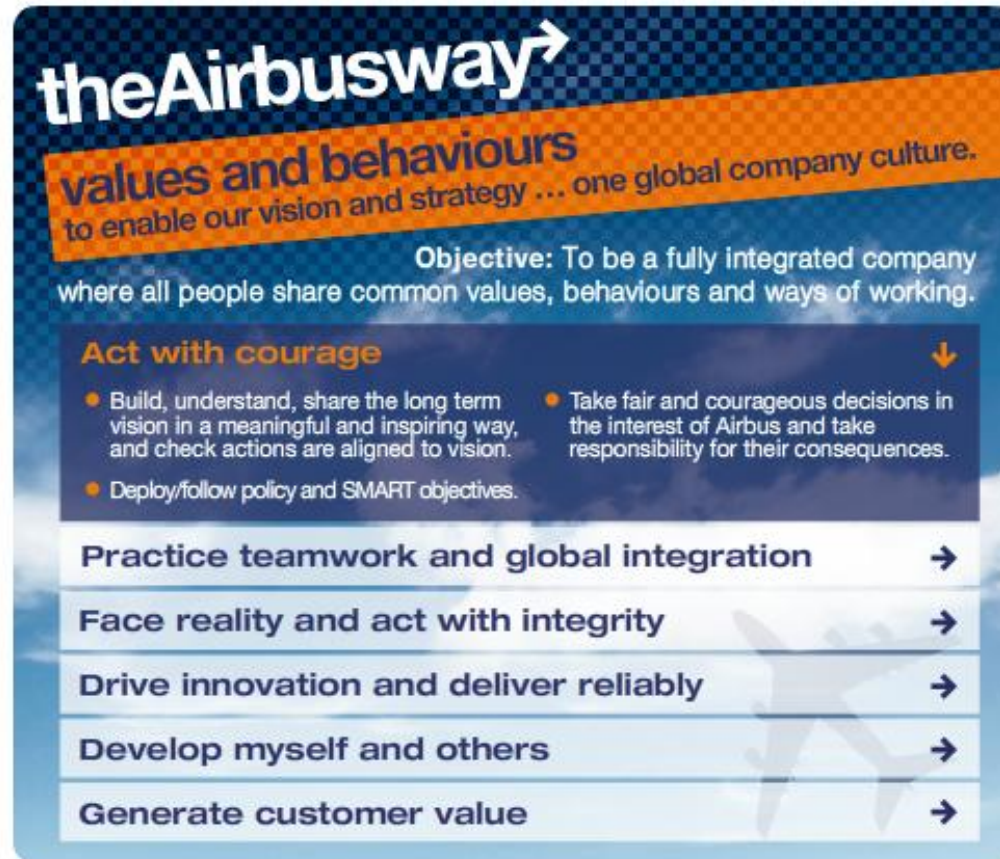


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Job Applications – Airbus



theAirbusway →

values and behaviours
to enable our vision and strategy ... one global company culture.

Objective: To be a fully integrated company where all people share common values, behaviours and ways of working.

Act with courage ↓

- Build, understand, share the long term vision in a meaningful and inspiring way, and check actions are aligned to vision.
- Take fair and courageous decisions in the interest of Airbus and take responsibility for their consequences.
- Deploy/follow policy and SMART objectives.

Practice teamwork and global integration →

Face reality and act with integrity →

Drive innovation and deliver reliably →

Develop myself and others →

Generate customer value →



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Evaluation and feedback

This session was:			
a) Interesting	b) Informative	c) Relevant	d) Enjoyable
4.54	4.83	4.77	4.42
This training session:			
a) Gave me a better understanding of what skills STEM employers are looking for	b) Gave me a better understanding of how the activities I undertake as a Student Ambassador have helped develop certain employability skills	c) Has given me examples and ideas about how I can articulate these skills in terms of my experiences as an Ambassador	d) Has made me more confident about providing evidence for a job application
4.66	4.60	4.65	4.63
Scores: 5 high - 1 low	48 Ambassadors		



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Evaluation and feedback

What else could have been included?

- Examples of volunteer work that would specifically improve and develop our employability skills
- Maybe we could look at common mistakes on application forms and things not to do?
- This session was very useful, now I feel more confident about my interview in 2 weeks time.
- Maybe more interviewing practices, as was very useful to be in that situation answering questions
- Covering letters in more depth
- CV writing

Our thoughts on future developments

- More effective sign-posting to other services – internal and external



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Evaluation and feedback

How did an experienced Ambassador feel about the session 4 months later?

I came away with a better understanding of what employability skills are and why they are so useful in your career. The workshop helped highlight my strengths and weaknesses; this was mainly due to the activities – Skills Game and Employability Skills Audit worksheet. A memorable aspect of the session was the importance placed on interviews and methods to put across your skills to an interviewer, for example; having anecdotes ready to demonstrate a time when you showed great customer service/confidence/leadership etc.

Speaking in front of the group was a great way to develop my confidence and improve projecting my skills to others, I would encourage this as much as possible in future sessions.

Did you feel there was anything missing?

To encourage the students to actually act on what they have learnt, have them each write down at least one task they will carry out to make themselves more employable/improve a transferable skill after they leave the session.



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Evaluation and feedback

How did an experienced Ambassador feel about the session 4 months later?

If you were to help run the session to future ambassadors what would/wouldn't you feel comfortable doing?

I would feel comfortable leading activities and joining in general debate to get ideas going. I don't feel I know quite enough to lead an entire session.



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Training the trainers

- Discussed using ice breakers and structuring training sessions to maximise effectiveness
- Reviewed structure of initial training session
- Identified activities that Ambassadors would be facilitating
- Discussed facilitation skills and techniques
- Practised leading activities
- Introduced to case study template



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Evaluation and feedback

6. The training session...

	5 (Strongly agree)	4	3	2	1 (Strongly disagree)	Response Count
a. Gave me a better understanding of how the activities I undertake as a Student Ambassador have helped develop certain employability skills.	42.9% (3)	14.3% (1)	14.3% (1)	28.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	7
b. Has helped me think about examples and anecdotes from my own experience as a Student Ambassador that I can use to illustrate employability skills.	57.1% (4)	28.6% (2)	14.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	7
c. Has given me examples and ideas about how I can articulate these skills in terms of my experiences as Student Ambassadors.	28.6% (2)	42.9% (3)	14.3% (1)	14.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	7
d. Gave me a better understanding of the activities that I would be helping to deliver as part of the Employability Session.	42.9% (3)	28.6% (2)	28.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	7
e. Make me feel more confident in my ability to make a positive contribution to the training.	42.9% (3)	42.9% (3)	14.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	7
f. Gave me a a better understanding of the skills needed to deliver training materials.	33.3% (2)	50.0% (3)	16.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	6



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Future plans

- Training materials will be available for other HEIs
- Embedding in institutional practice for all Ambassadors
- Case studies will be available to illustrate how Ambassadorial work develops identified employability skills
- Case studies will be available to illustrate how Ambassadors have found the workshop beneficial



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